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ABSTRACT

This booklet describes how managers and administrators can become more humane in their management activities. The publication lists 14 characteristics of humane management and stresses the importance of (1) employer trust of employees, (2) involvement of employees in decisionmaking, and (3) communication between the employer and the employees. (Author/DN)

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ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT

by
Kenneth A. Erickson

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ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT

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FOREWORD

Humaneness is an often neglected but important aspect of any management enterprise. Management practices can be found wherever one turns . . . management of business, of government, of industry, of schools, and of households . . . yet all management is not automatically humane. The possession of those important qualities of genuine trust, listening ability, caring for others, tolerance for some ambiguity, candor, risk-taking, and acceptance of individual differences determine whether or not a manager or the enterprise is humane.

If humaneness is not a part of the management enterprise, a subtle destructiveness sets in which is subversive both to managers and subordinates alike. This usually hinders the success of any enterprise.

This Bulletin summarizes a presentation by Kenneth Erickson at a conference sponsored by the OASA on "The Management Team in Educational Administration." His theme addresses a set of principles with which administrators might become more humane regardless of the particular enterprise or management structure.

After a review of this Bulletin, Cascade Employers Association, Inc. of the Pacific Northwest has determined that this Bulletin should prove useful to its members. Mr. R. H. Bourke, General Manager, states to his associates, "We think the concepts in this Bulletin represent 'The Cascade Way . . . ' of developing your team and, perhaps, yourself."

The principles discussed in the Bulletin are no less important in the educational enterprise. The basic human qualities described are essential for anyone interacting with students, parents, teachers, administrators, or other citizens. Responsible managers especially require a sensitivity and commitment to a style of management which respects basic human needs and the democratic principles respected in our nation.

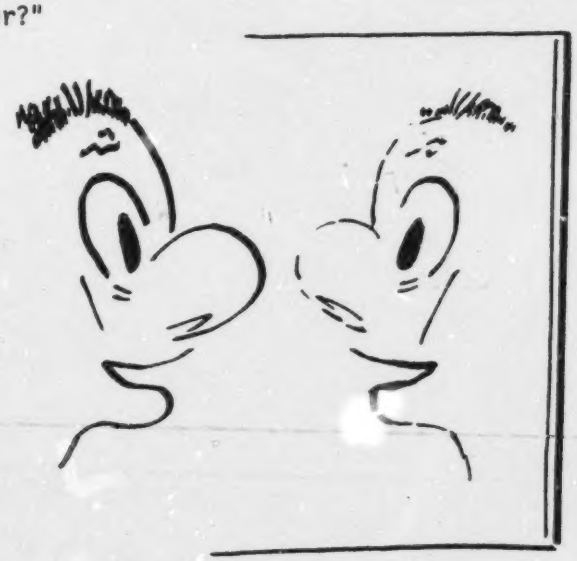
The welfare and success of our educational institutions are often measured by the accomplishment of citizenship goals by learners as well as by satisfied and productive employees. In my view, application throughout an enterprise of the principles identified in this Bulletin will enhance the achievement of each.

Don Egge
Deputy Superintendent
State Department of Education

Introduction

As managers each of us experiences success or failure for a variety of reasons. Regardless of our management style, however, neglecting humaness in management can eventually subvert the effective functioning of our organization. The well-being of our staff as well as improved opportunities for our organization's success require continual efforts to achieve management which is humane.

Each administrator must regularly look at himself and ask, "Am I a humane manager?"



"Am I willing to risk being authentic and honest? Am I willing to receive criticism without getting defensive? Am I willing to really listen to the ideas of others around me? Am I threatened if a staff member displays more insight into a problem than I? Do I need to feel superior to other individuals around me? Do I realize that any or all

others may see the world differently than I? Am I really willing to work together with others to solve difficult management problems?"

Our growth toward greater humaneness depends on our willingness to be completely honest about how we see ourselves in relation to the following summary of characteristics of humane management.

1. Humane management accepts the assumption that 99 percent of all individuals really desire to be successful in their work.
2. Humane management sees individuals not as static beings but as "in process of becoming"--as growing, improving human beings.
3. Failure to recognize and accept individual differences within a staff constitutes rejection of some individuals and is inhumane.
4. The more "masking" an individual manager engages in, the less authentic, understandable and humane will he appear to his people.
5. The larger the management enterprise, the less humane the organization may appear to people.
6. Humane management seeks out and values the thinking of staff members who need to know they can help to shape the destiny of their enterprise.
7. Managers who offer zero or near-zero feedback opportunities for their employees are destructive of morale and therefore not humane.

8. Managers who give negative feedback but fail to give generous positive feedback to individuals tend to be inhumane.
9. What is referred to as human engineering often tends to produce inhumane management.
10. Changes in the delegation of management authority without advance explanation to staff members constitutes one type of inhumane management.
11. The humane manager is a student of non-verbal communication, understands the "non-verbals" which he broadcasts, and carefully "listens" to what each team member says non-verbally.
12. Any manager who assumes that his co-workers see the world as he does (and who assumes that any existing differences in perception are of minor significance) is inhumane.
13. The manager who is more rejecting than accepting of himself will tend to be more rejecting than accepting of other employees and therefore less humane.
14. The frequency level of participation in decision-making activities is less an indicator of how humane the management enterprise is than the significance level of the decision-making activities shared.

The most important person managed by any administrator is the manager himself. Therefore, each of us must look at ourselves honestly and ask, "Am I the humane manager I want to be?"

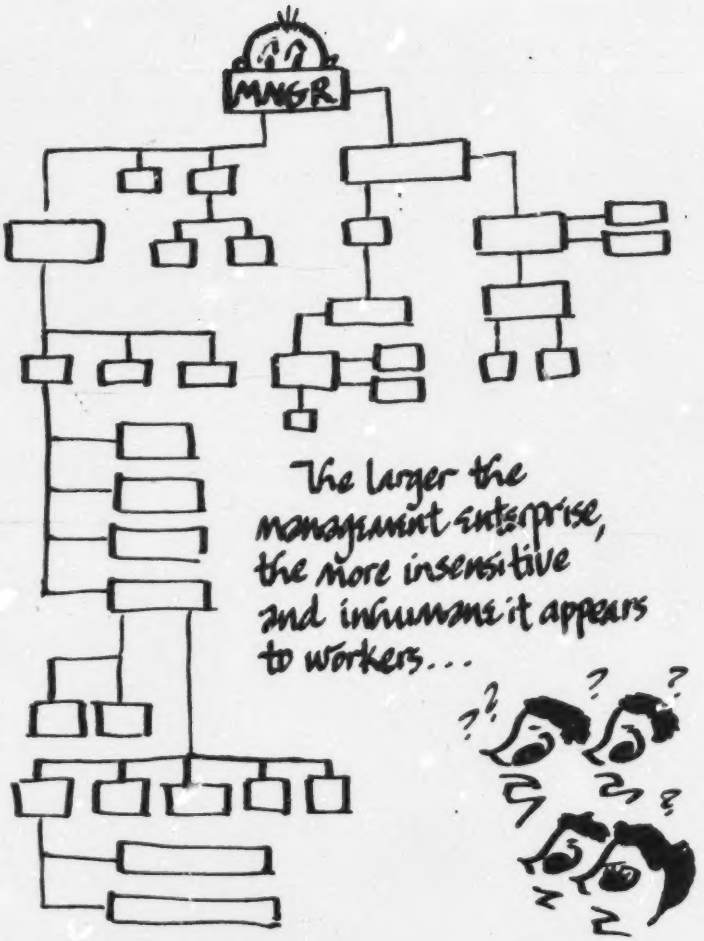
Humaneness . . .
Essential for Successful Management

The term management implies that some controlling, leading or a directing operation is taking place. Various styles of management are found in business, industry, schools, government and households. All management is not humane, however, and may lack the important qualities of caring, consideration and reasonableness.

If the quality of humaneness is not present in any management enterprise, a subtle destructiveness sets in which is subversive both to managers and subordinates. Such malevolence hinders the success of any management enterprise.

My purpose is to suggest ways of insuring the presence of a humane element in management regardless of management's physical setting. The word "humane" significantly alters the concept of management when it is used as a qualifier. "Humane" suggests that the needs of human beings

are recognized as having an inherent dignity and worthiness all of their own. "Humane management" then begins to look significantly different from any cavalier concept of raw management because plain management cannot guarantee that the quality of humaneness is involved. Typically an attitude of including those most affected by decisions has been added. This "caring" for those involved encourages a consultative and participative atmosphere in which the typical organizational hierarchy is not divisive by nature.



When an enterprise consists of only three to five individuals, there is actually no guarantee that the manager is necessarily humane. However, the boss probably seems more humane than someone who manages

a large number of employees, simply because he is more readily available and can be known as an individual. Sometimes, the larger the number of employees in a management enterprise, the more inhumane that organization may appear to its employees. This makes it incumbent on today's sincere manager of a larger number of individuals to conscientiously take steps toward achieving humane management.

Human Engineering

So-called "human engineering" at times seemed to imply squeezing all productiveness possible from each individual with little regard for the individual as a person. Under such circumstances "human engineering" may attempt to control individuals by identifying those thought to be influential and selling them on management's ideas. Such ideas often have been developed with little staff involvement but with a blind assumption on management's part that these ideas must be as impressive and appealing on the receiving end as they are in the eyes of their developers. Unfortunately, the larger the organization, the less face-to-face contact is possible, and the greater may be a temptation to "engineer" individuals rather than take the time to listen to and involve staff workers in some of management's planning.

Team members who have been "engineered" rather than involved in management planning, over a period of time can be expected to withdraw behind psychological shields of non-involvement. If confronted later with an opportunity to participate in management planning, they will

probably at first appear fearful, inept, or even distrustful of the opportunity. Thus a manager who wants to move from the engineering to the humane concept of management may need to work patiently, with relatively minimal results at first, until his staff members regain the courage to venture as well as the ability to create and to function once more as worthwhile rather than worth-less persons.

Management's Ability to Trust

Humaneness in management recognizes the fact that nearly every individual really wants to be successful in his work. This is consistent with Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y management concepts in his book The Human Side of Enterprise. His Theory X recognizes that autocratic managers usually consider individuals to be untrustworthy, indolent, disinterested and unreliable. However, he believes that Theory Y is more true to life. This theory of his suggests that individuals can be trusted and are naturally productive if given the opportunity . . . that they actually wish to be successful.

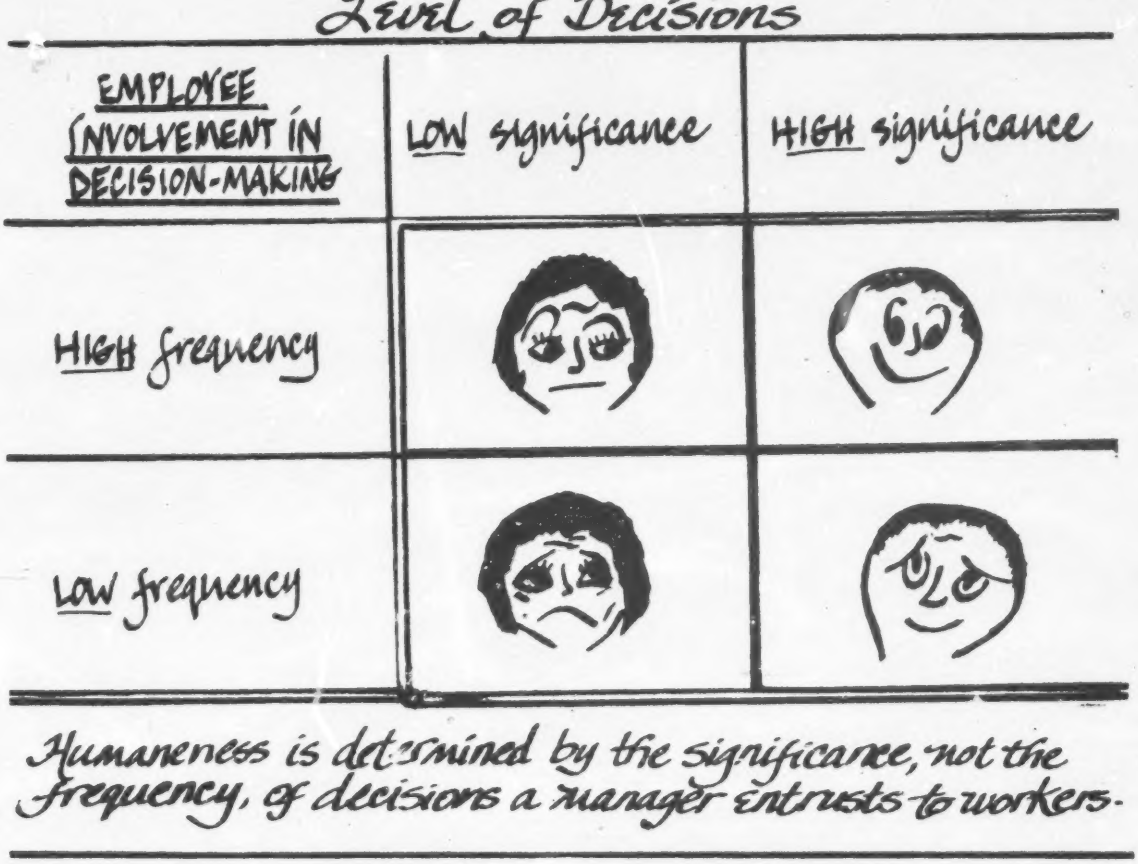
The humane manager has those necessary risk-taking qualities which are firmly based on his ability to exhibit genuine trust in human beings. He encourages the people working with him to continue to grow and improve by helping them develop abilities which even they were not sure they originally possessed. Trust is a basic rationale for any activity aimed at improving management. This is consistent with the thinking of Carl Rogers who suggests that a person is one who is in the process of

becoming . . . that he is a human being in flow rather than in some fixed state. He adds that such a person is sensitively open . . . sensitive to others with whom he is in relationship but most sensitive of all to the feelings and emerging reactions which he discovers in himself. This affirms that humane management sees individuals not as fixed and unimprovable but as "in process of becoming." Therefore the process of growth is the process of <u>becoming</u> a person and this is different from <u>being</u> a person. Trust encourages individuals to become . . . to grow . . . to improve.

<u>The Significance of Involvement</u>

A definite need exists for individuals to be involved in the management process. A person who is growing must feel involved, really part of what is going on, and in some degree helping shape his or her

own destiny together with the destiny of all. Therefore, individuals need to be involved in significant activities within the organization . . . and this is far more important than frequent participation in insignificant activities. Staff members should feel not only a surface part of what is going on, but need to feel that they play an important part in events of significance.


Level of Decisions
EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING
LOW significance
HIGH significance
HIGH frequency
LOW frequency
Humaneness is determined by the significance, not the frequency, of decisions a manager entrusts to workers.

One way to involve individuals is for managers to listen to and value the ideas of staff members. The humane manager involves people simply by sitting down and asking their help with a management problem.

He can be most effective by keeping his own preconceived solution (or ideas toward a solution) to himself until he listens to all his associate's ideas; by asking searching questions to get additional facts; by paraphrasing comments heard to encourage elaboration; by identifying obstacles to ready solutions; by expressing appreciation for helpful ideas; by asking the individual for any alternative solutions; by helping to evaluate the pros and cons of alternatives; and by agreeing upon a mutually understood plan of action.

Conversely, the less effort invested by a manager in sincere listening to what his staff members have to say, the lower will be the staff morale and the less humane his management efforts. In fact, the manager who generally imposes ideas upon his staff without their involvement will likely generate the "NIH" reaction (not invented here) rather than a "we-feeling."

Zero Feedback

Managers without two-way communication have what amounts to "zero feedback" from employees and cannot be considered humane. Illustrative of zero-feedback communication are memos, directives, bulletins, loudspeaker announcements, meetings at which the managers do all the talking, etc. Such one-way communication appears to be faster and more efficient because there's no excess of talking. And it normally is useful in emergency situations. Zero-feedback also has the dubious advantage of protecting subordinates from blame for management's poor ideas which associates have had no opportunity to react to and improve. Therefore, management with zero-feedback is less accurate, produces greater uncertainties both for management and for employees, results in very little satisfaction for team members, breeds employee hostility, and generally is harmful to group morale.

On the other hand, management which encourages free feedback is much more humane. The process of two-way communication is a little slower and not quite as orderly, but it reveals that both

receivers and senders of the communication share responsibility both for good decisions and for poor decisions that may result. Normally, two-way communication increases planning accuracy. It is particularly helpful with new, difficult or ambiguous material. It builds group morale, and it also permits new leadership to emerge.

Humane management that encourages feedback only from employees is not enough. They also need and desire feedback from management as to the quality of their work. This requires positive as well as negative feedback even though feedback frequently is only negative. Somehow it is not natural or easy for us to give positive feedback.

"Nobody ever tells you if you're doing a good job only if you do it wrong."

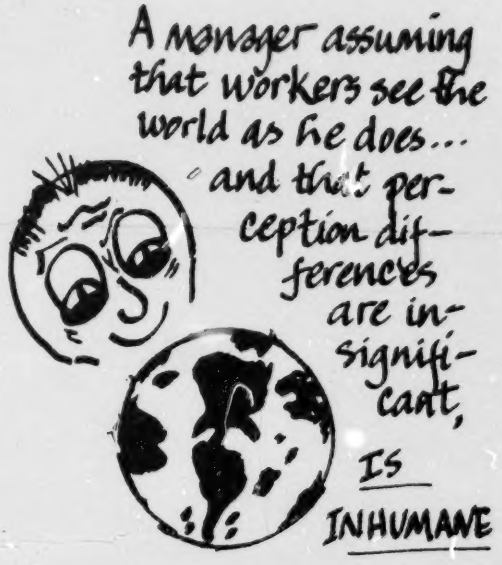
As managers we tend to have no vocabulary of praise but an over-adequate vocabulary of blame and criticism. As a result, managers often ignore the effectiveness of frequent words or letters of praise. Both positive and negative feedback are essential if individuals are to experience humane management.

"We have no vocabulary of praise, but an over-adequate vocabulary of blame and criticism."

Differences Recognized and Accepted?

Differences among team members working in the same activity usually are much greater than first realized. The insensitive or inhumane manager is one who assumes everyone else on his staff sees the world as he does or, that if any differences in perception exist, he assumes

that these differences are of very minor significance. Failure to understand that others see things differently is a basic and afflictive error. And failure to accept these differences, once identified, is evidence of insensitivity and a rejection of the individuals involved.


A manager assuming that workers see the world as he does... and that perception differences are insignificant, IS INHUMANE

One of the greatest negative challenges to humane management comes from the manager who is more rejecting than accepting of himself.

Self-acceptance?
The manager more rejecting than accepting of self will react similarly to staff....
...and thus be LESS HUMANE
UNSURE OF SELF

This type of individual as a manager unfortunately will tend to be more rejecting than accepting of others. Stated another way, the less humane and accepting a manager is of himself as an individual, the less humane and accepting he can be as a manager to others.

He needs to realize the direct relationship which exists between caring for self and caring for others. Thus, one of the most important people managed by an administrator is himself.

The most important person managed by the administrator is himself

In all actuality, then, the humane manager is basically secure enough as an individual that he does not need to be an "answer man" for all problems. He listens well, questions some and speaks sparingly. The humane manager does not need to be sure of all the outcomes in his area of responsibility and operate such a "tight ship." He doesn't need to be so defensive of criticism because he has the "our problem approach" as opposed to the "my problem approach." The humane manager also has a relatively high tolerance for ambiguity. Sharing an increasing proportion of his decision-making powers, he is able to exist and hopefully thrive in an environment of less predictable outcomes than if he retained all the decision-making powers for himself.

Keeping Employees Informed

Many management relationships, from boss to team, are not humane because the manager fails to clarify in advance how he plans to use his authority in different situations. A manager at one extreme may make decisions and then announce his decisions. At the other extreme, he may ask individuals to function within limits defined by him as the one with ultimate responsibility. Difficulties arise not just from an inconsistency of leadership behavior, but more specifically from a manager's not letting team members or employees know the rules of today's game in relation to the particular management problem under consideration. For example, the would-be humane manager may present his own ideas and invite serious questions while providing no specific limit to possible decisions by his staff members. Subsequently, he may ask the group to make a decision on another topic within some well-defined limits. In all such cases, the group involved needs to know the degree of authority being retained by the manager and the amount of authority being delegated to the staff--prior to tackling the problem.

Non-Verbal Communication

The humane manager also is a student of non-verbal communication. He attempts to comprehend the non-verbal messages which he continually broadcasts, and he carefully "listens to" what individuals may be saying through non-verbal communication. For example, the humane manager is sensitive to arms akimbo, the reddening of the neck of one on the

management team, the tensing of a foot during a conference, the member who suddenly falls silent for the rest of a meeting, what he "says" by where he spends most of his time in the management enterprise, what is inferred by how he allocates time, to who he is readily available, who he avoids or tends to ignore, etc.

The humane manager needs to be aware of the importance of "hospitality" and thoughtfulness towards other team members and visitors to his office. Managers who are successful, promotable and innovative normally greet their visitor at the office door, find a place to accommodate any coat and hat, offer coffee, seat the visitor by the side of his desk . . . ; are careful to remedy physical discomforts, offer the visitor a tour or lunch at the end of the conference and help the visitor find his next appointment.

One of the most fundamental qualities of a humane manager is his openness and honesty to others. The more "masking" that he as an individual utilizes in his management relationships, the less genuine,

the less predictable, the less sincere he will appear to his staff. Humaneness in management requires increasing openness and authenticity, and emphasizes the elimination of "phoniness." Being constructively open to others often is a risk-taking venture, but the humane manager must take the risks involved with constructive candor. He may make some errors and receive some criticism, but the resulting open and honest relationship with others and particularly with those on a management team will prove worth effort.

Other things being equal, the manager who cares more rather than the one who cares less about his staff members will be the more humane and the more successful.

Summary Check List:
Management Characteristics

HUMANE	NOT HUMANE
Sees associates as co-workers	Feels superior to associates
Believes others wish to succeed	Believes others indolent, indifferent
Positive, supportive	Negative, critical
Accepting of different opinions	Holds only one view of world
Listens carefully to associates	Major emphasis on telling, directing
Authentic, genuine	A sham, false
Trusts in others	Considers others unreliable
Open, honest	Difficult to know, deceitful, devious

HUMANE	NOT HUMANE
Involves associates in decisions	Decides, then "engineers" associates
Associates know how they are doing	Zero feedback leaves individuals ignorant as to how they are doing
Hospitable, friendly	Forbidding, repressive
Accepts self as is and can more easily accept others	Rejects self as is and tends to reject others
Willing to take some risks	Fearful of making any mistake
Tolerant of some ambiguities	Intolerant of any uncertainties
Pleased with co-workers' success	Feels threatened by successful co-workers
Behavior is consistent	Behavior is unpredictable
Able to admit to ignorance	Must have the answer(s)
Concerned for individuals as persons	Indifferent to concerns of individuals